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Our United Voice, April 6, 1993

University of Montana Black Student Union

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Our United Voice

Black Student Union Newsletter April 6, 1993

Black History Month

by Lori Beth Yeager

Black History Month was observed by The University of Montana with a full month of events celebrating African-American culture and heritage.

The Black Student Union kicked-off Black History Month by sponsoring a live video teleconference, "Beyond the Dream V: A Celebration of Black History," on February 3, 1993.

On February 16, BSU members presented skits centering on racism as a part of the University's "Into the Streets" program.

In response to the Black

Student Union's commitment to cultural education, BSU members spoke to various classrooms across Missoula bringing students a message of racial harmony.

Throughout the entire month of February, a pictorial display celebrating the lives and legacies of prominent African-Americans appeared in The University of Montana Mansfield Library. This display was put together by BSU Vice-President, Betty Gregory, utilizing pictures and articles contributed by several BSU members. The pictorial served as a visual reminder of the many contributions African-Americans have made, and continue to make to our society.

We have a wonderful history behind us...

It reads like the history of people in an heroic age...

If you read the history of Africa, the history of your ancestors- people of whom you should feel proud- you will realize that they have a history that is worthwhile. They have traditions that have value of which you can boast and upon which you can base a claim for the right to share in the blessings of democracy.

We are going back to that beautiful history and it is going to inspire us to greater achievements.

Carter G. Woodson

One Creation

donated by Anna Mulfinger

THE MENTAL WAR
SEGREGATION
STILL CREATES IN ME
ISOLATION

THOUGH ROOTED DEEP IN OUR HISTORY
WITHOUT EACH OTHER
WE CAN'T BE FREE

MY SONG RINGS A DREAM
AND WORDS OF HOPE
BUT MY VOICE ALONE
CAN'T REACH THE POWER
OF OTHERS AND THE REALIZATION
THAT WE ARE ALL ONE PLANET
ONE CREATION

SO WHEN YOU COME TO MY DOOR
MY HAND IS YOURS NO MATTER WHAT CREED
YOUR BEAUTY IS YOUR MIND NOT YOUR SKIN
AND YOUR COLOR IS NO MATTER
FOR THE GRACE YOU SHOW IS BORN IN YOUR SOUL

TO OVERCOME IS OUR AMBITION AND WISH
TO LOOSEN THE STRAIN OF THE CLENCHING FIST
SET THE HATRED ON FIRE
AND BRING WARNTH AND UNITY
TO ALL HUMANITY.

S. Foehl - Acoustic Junction

Racism, Sexism and Isolationism

an editorial by John Harris

Racism and sexism affect us and our actions whether we agree or not. We as people have stereotypes of others; and whether we express these feelings with an open voice or in our minds is the difference in determining if we are to be labeled RACIST, SEXIST, or BIGOT. But, only acceptance and willingness to change one's thoughts, ideas, and actions can change society for the better.

The Black Student Union's focus during the University's "Into The Streets" program was on isolationism. In the first skit that we presented, the group decided whether or not to accept the individual. This process was a form of bias by the group. At first, the individual has hope, but due to the personal opinions of those within the group, the individual feels isolated and unwanted. In the second skit, the "farm animal" experiment, one animal is left by itself. It cries out but there is no one there to accept it. The other animals bunch up together in their groups, but the "lone sheep" is left in the dark- alone and isolated.

You might have listened to the opening remarks of hatred, malice, and ill-will self-imposed by these participants. You might have been shocked by the slurs and name tags. There is a reason behind this: the participants were calling out names. The remarks were racist and sexist. They were meant to bring racism into the light in a fury. Hopefully however, through these actions you were able to focus on racism, sexism, and isolationism. Let's face it, prejudice is everywhere. Not everyone is included in our society. The bias might be a number, color, sex, sexual preference, eye color, or even hair color. Only once we acknowledge our--yes OUR shortfalls, can we overcome and attack the issues and barriers of modern day society.

Ask yourself:

What is it like to be black on this sparsely diversified campus?

What is it like to be a female in this male dominated society?

What is it like to be gay on our campus?

And finally-

What can I change about myself in order to make society better as a whole?

i am who i am

by Betty Gregory

i am...
i am and always have been...
i am immortality in the flesh...
i am through the process of evaluation...
i am the immortalized soul of the first seed grown...
i am millions of years of cultivation and evolution...
i am the possessor of the same seed which created all
and through me does its immortality perpetuate itself...
i am, and through the seed of my children's children...
i will always be...
i am the culmination of man and woman...
i am birth...
i am life...the hopes...the dreams of all...
i am the past...
i am the future...
i am the begetter who begot the begetters
i am the giver of life to another life that may bear others...
i am and will always be...
i am...
you are...
we are...
one...
i am who i am...
i am black...
i am white...
i am yellow...
i am red...
i am strong...
i am weak...
i'm your mother...
i'm your father...
i'm your brother...
i'm your sister...
i'm your uncle...
i'm your aunt...
i'm your cousin...
i am your best friend...
i am your worst enemy...
i am who i am
WHO AM I!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!can you guess?

The Kingdome

by Linda McFarland

Jesters play tricks
pantomimes, illusions
with jeers.
Emerald green shimmer
of hope, candle blown out
leafs tear.
Life of an innocent babe
a lamb, lab tested
exposed
coat sheared
left naught
'cept a bundle of fear.
City of Angels
burns red hot embers at night
in a patchwork quilt design.

Trees, statues of wilds
Kingdoms shot down
at the tip of a gold digger's hat.
Dust filters into the air
and chokes the children's
laborious breaths in the throat.
Cities rise,
looking up, no trees do I see
tall buildings overhead, sway
concrete to the ground
glistening eyes, each window
like ice on Lone Mountain peak,
Monuments
to man's ills
of misplaced power.
Trees in the forests
fall witness to
man's lusting desire
for control,
chain saws
slaughtered them down
jesters chuckle and crackle with ire.

Go North Mr. King,
battered and bruised
left to the batons of
the concrete gods,
asphalt grass, gravel
rips blood red chunks
of brown skin
from Rodney's face
stripped of his rights
his dignity and pride.
The Emerald Green Empire

a candle of light
dances in delight,
shimmering
over the reclusive pond
protected by the forest
tall austere sentinels, stand guard
blue spruce and lodge pole pine.

Gone with the wave
of a wizard's wand,
crack of a gavel
whir of a saw
the delicate balance
of china placed
upon a stack of dimes,
hope falls
like trees cut
down in the wilderness
sharp needles poke up
through blistered skin
like thorns
open sores left raw.

Phi Beta Sigma

by Lori Yeager

UM's first Black Greek Letter Fraternity, Phi Beta Sigma, was founded in 1914 at Howard University and has as its principles, Brotherhood, Scholarship and Service. These principles are exhibited in the fraternity motto, "Culture for Service and Service for Humanity." As one of the eight predominantly Black Greek-Lettered organizations, Phi Beta Sigma has a membership of over 90,000 with 600 chapters throughout the United States, Switzerland, Africa and now, at The University of Montana.

Phi Beta Sigma consists of men dedicated to enhancing great minds and promoting fellowship, African-American freedom, justice, equal rights, and service to America's communities. Being both a social and service organization, Phi Beta Sigma has many programs. Their three National Programs are Social Action, Education, and Bigger and Better Business.

Phi Beta Sigma offers the professional-minded person personal growth, innovative and dynamic programs, leadership development, social functions and an opportunity for community involvement. If you are interested in receiving more information about Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, contact Stacy Edwards at 728-0634.

A Word From Sam

Twenty-five years ago, a man was passing through Montana looking for a change. In Chicago, he had dealt with the social unrest and violence in the struggle for racial equality. An activist for civil rights, he witnessed much poverty, injustice and the loss of friends dear to him. He did not come to Missoula to escape, only to continue his quest for human justice. This man, Ulysses Doss, asked people at our University to accept and love their spiritual self. He has advocated peace within to help us learn to live with one another. During his stay here he has met much resistance but continued to remain hopeful. He has taught African-American studies for the twenty-five years not only to educate, but to fill a necessary void that was absent at this University. He has touched thousands of students that have fought to take his classes. He dedicated his efforts to becoming a friend to this University community. Indeed he will miss, but we must continue to build on the foundation of racial awareness and hope that Ulysses has laid. We do thank you, Ulysses, for sharing with us and inspiring us by your words. The BSU will miss you, your students will miss you, and truly the University will miss you. The torch that you have passed us will be carried on here for years to come.

Samuel K. Thompson
Black Student Union President

Black Student Union
c/o ASUM
The University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812

Black Student Union Meetings

April 13	7:00 p.m.	UC MT Rooms
April 20	7:30 p.m.	UC Room 114
April 27	7:00 p.m.	UC MT Rooms
May 4	7:00 p.m.	UC MT Rooms
May 11	7:00 p.m.	UC MT Rooms

Come Be A Voice!

Our United Voice is published monthly during the academic year by the Black Student Union. Articles, article ideas, and editorials can be sent to the Black Student Union in care of ASUM.

Lori Beth Yeager, Editor

Mansfield Library